

**Abstract 680**

**TITLE:** Using a Community Partnership and Motivational Interviewing to Serve HIV+ Gay and Bisexual Men

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**ISSUE:** Although many HIV + MSM have adopted safer sexual behaviors, new infections persist. There is some evidence that rates of unprotected anal intercourse are similar for HIV+ and HIV- men. And, given HIV incidence rates 3 among Persons of Color that are twice that of Caucasians, it is important that projects recruit ethnically diverse participants. There are myriad reasons why HIV+MSM who are engaging in high-risk sex may be reluctant to come forward. Engaging these men in low threshold, focused discussions about their risky behavior is important in the pursuit of helping them reduce their rates of high risk sex.

**SETTING:** The audience is HIV+ gay and bisexual men who have had anal sex in the preceding four months with a male partner. Project staff are located at the UW School of Social Work (UW SSW) and at the People of Color Against AIDS Network (POCAAN) in Seattle. The ability to conduct the intervention over the phone (and in-person) and the availability of toll free numbers help reduce barriers to access.

**PROJECT:** Project staff engaged in several activities: 1) the creation of the UW SSW and POCAAN partnership; 2) a # review of behavior change interventions that led to use of Motivational Interviewing, a style of engaging in constructive 2 conversations about change that has been effective with other behaviors; 3) the conduct of focus groups with members of the target population. In the end, a 2 part intervention was developed: 1) An in-depth assessment of values, beliefs, attitudes and details on the 4 most recent anal sex partners; 2) A discussion of information provided in the questionnaire highlighting discrepancies between values, beliefs and risky sexual behaviors. Staff explores these conflicts with participants and support and amplifies self-motivating statements by respondents that indicate interest in risk reduction.

**RESULTS:** To date, 107 men have completed assessments and motivational interviews. Men of color represent 36% of 2 the sample. Out of 107 HIV+ men, 53 (50%) reported unprotected anal sex with 88 partners whose serostatus was negative or not known. Among this group, 30 reported UA with 51 partners who may not have known the respondent was seropositive. Six month follow-up data with 38 participants show a 31% reduction in the proportions of participants 2 reporting unprotected anal sex with a partner of negative or unknown serostatus.

**LESSONS LEARNED:** The UW-POCAAN partnership has proven to be an effective way of ensuring a high rate of participation by men of color. This brief intervention shows promise for reducing transmission risks among a group at high risk for causing new infections.

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